

March 6, 2021

The Honorable Gary A. Winfield
The Honorable Steven J. Stafstrom
The Honorable Alex Kasser
The Honorable Matt Blumenthal
The Honorable John A. Kissel
The Honorable Craig C. Fishbein

Joint Committee on Judiciary
Connecticut General Assembly
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Chairs Winfield and Stafstrom, Vice Chairs Kasser and Blumenthal, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

Our names are Rachel Prehodka-Spindel and Emily Pagano, and we are testifying in support of **Proposed Bill No. 6321, An Act Concerning the Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act**. The Connecticut Parentage Act (CPA) will update the state's parentage law to promote the security of all children.

This law is vitally important to protect families like ours. We have been in a committed relationship for over ten years and support each other in every way. We are not married. In 2017 we decided we wanted to become parents together and were lucky to have comprehensive insurance coverage for assisted reproductive technology. Our first child, Dylan, was conceived through reciprocal in-vitro fertilization using donor sperm and Rachel's egg. Emily then carried the pregnancy and in December 2018 gave birth to Dylan, so we are jointly parents to her in every way. Before Dylan was born, we asked about signing a voluntary acknowledgment of parentage form to establish our joint parentage in the hospital as soon after birth as possible. We were told by Connecticut Vital Records Office that we could not access the protections of this form because Rachel is a woman, not a man. As a result, Rachel was not able to sign a VAP form and protect Dylan from the moment of her birth.

In 2020, we decided we wanted to grow our family again, this time using an embryo that was conceived with Emily's egg and donor sperm, resulting in a twin pregnancy that Rachel is currently carrying. We are similarly concerned about our ability to establish joint parentage for these children upon their birth, and upset and angry that Connecticut, where we live and work, does not allow us to secure our children like other parents can. We do not feel that we should have to adopt our own children. We think that Connecticut parentage laws must equally protect all children – including Dylan and our soon to be born twins.

The Connecticut Parentage Act (CPA) ensures all children have equal access to the security of a legal parent-child relationship, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, or the marital status, gender, or sexual orientation of their parents. This bill will comprehensively update Connecticut law to ensure our state parentage laws remain constitutional, best practice, and protective of all of Connecticut's children.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony in support of **Proposed Bill No. 6321**.

Sincerely,

Rachel Prehodka-Spindel and Emily Pagano
58 Rowland Drive, East Hartford, CT